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Senator Hardiman Applauds Administration's Decision to Recommend Reinstatement of Project Funding for I-96/36th Street Interchange

Announcement Comes After Extensive Discussion and Public Input

LANSING— Following months of deliberation, public input and negotiations, Sen. Bill Hardiman (R-Kentwood), today hailed the agreement between the Republican-controlled Legislature and the Granholm administration which restored previously deferred funding for the proposed I-96/36th Street Interchange in Cascade Township. Once completed, this project will provide direct access to the Gerald R. Ford International Airport and relieve much congestion on other roads in the area.

“This is great news for the residents of Kent County,” Senator Hardiman said. “The growth in West Michigan has created a demand for this new interchange over the years. This step toward providing adequate road infrastructure funding to accommodate our growth is a step in the right direction.”

Earlier this year, Gov. Jennifer Granholm and the Michigan Department of Transportation announced they were deferring 34 capacity road improvement projects across the state, including the I-96/36th Street Interchange. The administration's willingness to include the project came following intense budget negotiations between the governor and legislative leadership.

Upon approval of the Michigan Transportation Commission, interchange design, right-of-way acquisition and construction of the new interchange will begin. Local construction of the 36th Street extension will also move forward and preservation work on the portion of I-96 adjacent to the proposed interchange will proceed after completion of the design. The project was restored through significant public comment and concern regarding safety concerns, congestion and the need for more direct access to the airport.

“I am pleased to announce that the I-96/36th Street Interchange will move forward as scheduled,” Hardiman said. “The safety concerns and business development issues cited by the Grand Rapids community have been heard and resolved.”